

THE *TRUE* GOD OF HEAVEN BATTLES THE *FALSE* GODS OF EGYPT

Presented by

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Probably one of the most famous stories in the Bible is the account found in Exodus chapters 7 through 12, which tells how God sent ten plagues upon the people of Egypt because their pharaoh would not free the Israelites from slavery. You probably remember several of those plagues. For example, God caused the water of the Nile River to turn to blood. He caused frogs and locusts to infest the land. He sent diseases upon the Egyptians' livestock. He rained hail on their crops. He caused the firstborn of their children and their animals to die. And so on.

But what you may **not** know is that many of these plagues were sent for a specific reason. The Egyptians worshiped many false gods. In fact, they had a god or goddess for just about everything. There was a god of the Nile. There was a Sun god, a Moon god, and a god of the harvests. There was a god of the wind, a god of the dead, and even a god named Khnum (pronounced "ka-noom") who supposedly created all the other gods! The most important of all the Egyptian gods was Ra (pronounced "rah"), who was the Sun god. The pharaohs were considered "sons of Ra," which meant, then, that they, too, were considered to be gods here on Earth. So, when Moses and Aaron went to pharaoh on Jehovah's behalf and told that pagan Egyptian king to free the Israelites, it suddenly became a contest to see who was real and who was most powerful—the Egyptians' gods or the God of Moses and Aaron.

Several of the plagues that God sent upon the people of Egypt were designed specifically to teach the Egyptians that their gods were completely powerless and, in fact, **that those gods did not even exist!** In Exodus 12:12, God told Moses, "On all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord." Examine several of the plagues with me, and you will see what God meant by that statement.

Hapi (pronounced "hoppy") was the god of the Nile River—which was considered to be the source of Egypt's great power. So God, working through Moses, turned the Nile River to blood (Exodus 7:20). The Bible says "And all the Egyptians dug round about the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile. Seven days passed after the Lord had struck the Nile" (Exodus 7:24). All the fish died as well, which meant that the Egyptians could not eat any fish. It is interesting to note that Egyptians ate only fresh-water fish because they thought that eating salt-water fish would make them spiritually impure. So, not only did the Egyptians get terribly thirsty, but they got terribly hungry as well. Why didn't Hapi, the god of the Nile, "fix things"? It was because Hapi did not exist—**but God did!**

In the second plague, God sent frogs to cover the land (Exodus 8:5-6). Egypt had a number of frog gods and goddesses, the most popular of which was Hekat (pronounced "hee-cat"), the goddess of fertility and childbirth. This second plague of frogs mocked her abilities because frogs always were associated with the fertility goddess, and now they were appearing everywhere and could not be controlled—which meant that the goddess Hekat ("hee-cat") did not really exist either!

The seventh plague of hail and severe thunderstorms was directed against the crops of Egypt, and was intended to cripple Egypt's economy (Exodus 9:22-23). Osiris (pronounced "O-sire-us") was the Egyptian god of the dead, but he also was connected closely with the abundance of grain. Yet Osiris was powerless to stop the hail from destroying the Egyptians' grain—which meant that he, too, did not exist!

The ninth plague of darkness (Exodus 10:21-23) was an attack upon Ra, the Sun god. If Ra could not cause the Sun to shine—and he couldn't—then it showed that not only were all of Egypt's other gods and goddesses powerless, but their most important god, Ra, was just as powerless.

After all ten of the plagues had occurred, not a single god or goddess of the Egyptians could do anything to stop the plagues or help the Egyptians. In the end, because of those plagues, God caused the pharaoh of Egypt, who considered himself a god, to free the Israelites. **Heaven's God won;** Egypt's gods lost.

But why? It was because false gods like those of the Egyptians do not really exist. But the God of the Bible does. Isn't it comforting to know that God lives and that He is in control? Jeremiah wrote in Jeremiah 10:10, "The Lord is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King." God is all-powerful. In Genesis 18:14, God asked the question, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Jesus answered that question in Mark 10:27 when He said, "With God, all things are possible."

What an amazing God we serve! Yet perhaps the most amazing aspect of God is His love for us. Paul wrote in Romans 5:10, "For if when we were God's enemies we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son,...and we shall be saved by Christ's life." Jesus said in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

God took the lives of the Egyptians who threatened the Israelites. Today, however, rather than God **taking** your life, He **offers** you life—through the Gospel, which is "the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16). I hope that each one of us today will choose to be like Moses and Aaron who believed in and obeyed God, rather than choosing to be like the Egyptians who refused to believe in and obey God—and who perished as a result. What is the status of **your** faith today? Is it strong or weak?